

The Relationship Between Teacher Candidates' Self-Efficacy and Attitudes of Sports History

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Abstract

The objective of the present study is to analyze the relationship between physical education and sports teacher candidates' academic self-efficacy and attitudes towards the course of sports history.

The population of the present study consists of 240 junior and senior teacher candidates studying at School of Physical Education and Sports at Yozgat Bozok University and Faculty of Sports Sciences at Erciyes University and Mehmet Akif Ersoy University. The sample group consists of 138 participants randomly selected from the population.

A Personal Information Form developed by the researcher, academic self-efficacy scale developed by Jerusalem and Schwarzer (1981) and adapted to Turkish context by Yılmaz, Gürçay, and Ekici (2007), and the attitude scale towards the course of sports history developed by Yılmaz, Namlı, and Kan (2013) were used for data collection.

The data obtained in the study were analyzed using a personal computer. Numbers, percentages, mean values and standard deviations were used as descriptive statistical methods in the data analysis. Pearson correlation analysis was applied to the continuous variables of the study.

As a result, a positive correlation was found between physical education teacher candidates' self-efficacy and attitudes towards the course of sports history. It can be suggested that this tendency stems from teacher candidates' academic development during their education as a university student, which is a transition to a professional life, and their belief in the importance of transferring their academic development to younger generations during their professional career.

Keywords: academic self-efficacy, attitude, physical education and sports, sports history

1. Introduction

In addition to leading important innovations in the history of humanity from the past to the present (Karakuş & Köse, 2018), technological developments also continuously encourage people to aim for a higher degree of perfection (Karakuş, 2012). The potential of academically successful citizens bears utmost importance in the development and excellence of societies. It is acknowledged that education plays a crucial role in raising individuals who can think in all areas of life, process information, make their own decisions and try to reach perfection as a potentially successful individual.

In this respect, the concept of academic self-efficacy can be defined as an individual's perception that s/he can perform a given academic task and responsibility at a certain level of success (Donmuş, Akpınar, & Eroğlu, 2017). According to another definition, academic self-efficacy is related to an individual's motivation, academic choices and success (Pajares, 1996).

Attitude as a factor affecting academic success (Kan & Akbaş, 2005) is used to express an individual's tendency to react to any phenomenon or object (Demirel & Ün, 1987; Gözler & Taşçı, 2015). Another definition approaches attitude as a neural and mental state resulting from direct or indirect phenomena organized by previous experiences and readiness, which directly or indirectly influence an individual's reactions to all similar events and topics (Shapiro, 1999).

Nowadays, expanding its sphere of influence, sports have started to function as a powerful educational tool in solving social problems in order to respond to individuals' different expectations. It is a tool that contributes

positively to individuals' entire lives and enables them to develop. It has been scientifically proven that a conscious and regular experience of sports played an important role in preserving an individual's health and success and boosting their personal mood, regardless of age (Yalçinkaya, Saracaloğlu, & Varol, 1993).

Yıldırım and Bayrak (2019) stated that students increased their quality of life and socialization through participation in sports based physical activities, which had a positive effect on their overall academic success. Therefore, it is evident that training effective physical education and sports teachers with professional and personal competencies is important in raising healthy and successful generations.

Because teachers occupy an important position in the education system, they should be good observers and guides in line with the goals of the teaching-learning processes in order to offer efficiency in education and develop positive attitudes.

An effective teacher must possess two basic qualities: personal and professional. While expected personal qualities include tolerance, patience, open-mindedness, affection, understanding and humor, expectation of high success from the student, and encouragement and support for the student, professional qualities can be listed as general culture, subject area knowledge, professional knowledge and teaching skills (Erden, 1998). It is considered that the level of knowledge in sports history, which is among professional qualities for a physical education and sports teacher, is very important.

In general terms, history emerges as an academic discipline of educational sciences with an educational (to gain knowledge, skills and attitudes of historical content determined by history teaching programs) and academic research (the determination of scientific problems and barriers encountered in the education of history, solutions to these problems and offering concrete suggestions) aspect (Demircioğlu, 2014).

The history of sports, which is one of the fundamental courses at the departments of sports, is thought to be very significant in terms of informing younger generations about successful and inspiring athletes in the history of sports, and the history of sports activities from the past to the present.

The literature review demonstrates that there are studies focusing on academic/self-efficacy (Turan, Karaoğlu, Kaynak, & Pepe 2016; Saracaloğlu et al., 2017; Izgar & Dilmaç, 2008; Caba & Pekel, 2017), attitude (Pepe et al., 2011; Turan, Uşflu, Koç, Karaoğlu, & Ulucan, 2018; Dalbudak, Gürkan, Yigit, Kargun, Hazar, & Dorak, 2016; Dalbudak & Yiğit, 2019; Alp & Süngü, 2016; Kumartaşlı, 2010; Yıldırım, Araç-Ilgar, & Uslu, 2018) and sports history (Yılmaz et al., 2013; Dönmez, 1998; Turkey & Aydın, 2017; Abe, 1991) in the existing literature. However, no studies investigating physical education and sports teacher candidates' attitudes towards academic self-efficacy and the course of sports history were found. In the light of this, the present study aims to analyze the relationship between physical education and sports teacher candidates' academic self-efficacy and attitudes towards the course of sports history.

2. Methods

2.1 Model of the Study

The present study uses descriptive and relational survey model. It can be defined as "a research model aiming to determine the presence and/or the degree of co-variation between two and more variables" (Karasar, 2007).

2.2 Creating Volunteer Groups

The population of the present study consists of 240 junior and senior teacher candidates studying at School of Physical Education and Sports at Yozgat Bozok University and Faculty of Sports Sciences at Erciyes University and Mehmet Akif Ersoy University. The sample group consists of 138 participants randomly selected from the population (Çingı, 1994).

Table 1. Participants' demographic features

	Variables	N	%
Gender	Male	84	60.9
	Female	54	39.1
	Total	138	100
Age	18-21	91	65.9
	22 +	47	34.1
	Total	138	100
University	MAKÜ	44	31.9
	Erciyes	37	26.8
	Bozok	57	41.3
	Total	138	100
Grade Point Average	1.25-1.99 (Low)	8	5.8
	2.00-2.99 (Mid)	74	53.6
	3.00-4.00 (High)	56	40.6
	Total	138	100
Accommodation	Hostel	18	13.0
	Family	85	61.6
	Housemates	35	25.4
	Total	138	100
Weekly Work Time	1-10	91	65.9
	11 +	47	34.1
	Total	138	100

When Table 1 is analyzed, it can be observed that 60.9% of the participants is male, while 39.1% of them is female. 65.9% of the participants is aged between 18 and 21, whereas 34.1% of them is aged 22 years old and over. 31.9% of the participants study at Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, 26.8% of the participants study at Erciyes University, and 41.3% of the participants study at Bozok University. Grade point average of the participants is 5.8% low, 53.6% medium, and 40.6% high. 13% of the participants live in hostel, 61.6% of them live by their families, and 25.4% of them live with a housemate. According to their weekly work time data, 65.9% of the participants work for 1 to 10 hours, while 34.1% of them work for 11 hours and above.

2.3 Data Collection Techniques

In order to collect data in the present study, a personal information form prepared by the researcher, academic self-efficacy and attitude scales for the course of sports history were used.

2.4 Personal Information Form

It contains six questions in order to obtain the participants' gender, age, the university which they attend, academic grade point average, accommodation and weekly work time.

2.5 Academic Self-Efficacy Scale

The scale developed by Jerusalem and Schwarzer (1981) (Academic Self-Efficacy Scale) measures students' levels of academic self-efficacy through 7 items in one dimension. The items were designed using a 4-point Likert type scale. The original scale was developed after it had been applied to medical school students, and the Cronbach Alpha value of the scale was calculated as 0.87.

The Turkish adaptation of the scale was carried out by Yılmaz et al. (2007). The Turkish version of the scale was applied to 672 prospective university students from different academic fields. The findings of the analysis indicated that one-dimensional and 7-item structure of the original scale was preserved in Turkish scale, too. Cronbach Alpha reliability value of the scale was calculated as .79. Thus, academic self-efficacy scale can be considered as a valid and reliable scale to determine university students' self-efficacy related to academic learning in Turkey.

2.6 Attitude Scale for Sports History Course

The scale developed by Yılmaz et al. (2013) to determine the attitudes of the students studying at School of Physical Education and Sports towards the course of sports history consists of 20 items. The items of the 5-point Likert type scale are scored as (1) 'I strongly disagree', (2) 'I disagree', (3) 'I am indecisive', (4) 'I agree' and

(5) I strongly agree. 12 of these items are positive, whereas 8 of them are negative. The first of the three factors in the scale is defined as "Feelings for the lesson", the second is "Achievements in the Course of Sports History Course", and the third is the "Activity Dimension". The first, second and third sub-factors consist of 13, 4 and 3 items, respectively. To test the reliability and homogeneity of the scale, Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was examined, which was found to be 0.91. A calculated reliability coefficient of 0.70 and higher is generally accepted as sufficient for the reliability of the test scores.

2.7 Statistical Analysis

Shapiro-Wilk test is only one of the methods used to study the normality of the statistical data. According to the statistical data obtained from the present study, skewness and kurtosis distributions are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Skewness-Flatness and Shapiro-Wilk test significance level results of participants' scale scores

	N	Skewness	Kurtosis
Academic Self-Efficacy	138	-.771	1.120
Emotions for the Course of Sports History	138	-1.085	.896
Achievements in the Course of Sports History	138	-.736	.028
Activities in the Course of Sports History	138	-.121	-.647
Total Attitude Towards the Course of Sports History	138	-.726	.158

When Shapiro-Wilk Test results are analyzed, it can be observed that participants' attitude scores towards academic self-efficacy and the course of sports history displayed a significant level of deviation from normality (Table 2). Normal distribution curves demonstrate that there were no excessive deviations from normality. In the existing literature, while George and Mallery (2016) argue that the values of skewness and kurtosis are ideally acceptable between ± 1 , Demir, Saatçioğlu, and İmrol (2016) argue that these values must be within a range of ± 2 for normality.

Under these circumstances, it was decided to use parametric statistical analysis tests. The data obtained from the present study were analyzed using a personal computer. Numbers, percentages, mean values and standard deviations were used as descriptive statistical methods in the data analysis. Pearson correlation analysis was applied to the continuous variables of the present study.

3. Findings

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of the scores obtained from the scales

	N	Min	Max	X±Sd
Academic Self-Efficacy	138	11.00	35.00	26.275±4.410
Feelings for the Course of Sports History	138	17.00	65.00	50.355±10.480
Achievements in the Course of Sports History	138	4.00	20.00	15.558±3.771
Activities in the Course of Sports History	138	3.00	15.00	9.188±3.365
Total Attitude Towards the Course of Sports History	138	33.00	100.00	75.101±13.738

It can be understood from Table 3 that the academic self-efficacy of the physical education and sports teacher candidates who participated in the study was 26.275 ± 4.410 . It was found that participants' mean scores were 50.355 ± 10.480 in the sub-dimension of feelings for the course of sports history, 15.558 ± 3.771 for the sub-dimension of achievements, 9.188 ± 3.365 for the sub-dimension of activities, and their total scores for the attitude towards the course of sports history were calculated as 75.101 ± 13.738 .

Table 4. The relationship between participants' academic self-efficacy and attitudes towards the course of sports history

		1.	2	3	4	5
1. Academic Self-Efficacy	r	1				
	p					
	n	138				
2. Feelings for the Course of Sports History	r	.025	1			
	p	.771				
	n	138	138			
3. Achievements in the Course of Sports History	r	.417	.386	1.		
	p	.000	.000			
	n	138	138	138		
4. Activities in the Course of Sports History	r	.316	.120	.565	1	
	p	.000	.159	.000		
	n	138	138	138	138	
5. Total Attitude Towards the Course of Sports History	r	.211	.898	.707	.492	1
	p	.013	.000	.000	.000	
	n	138	138	138	138	138

When Table 4 is analyzed, a low positive correlation was found between physical education and sports teacher candidates' academic self-efficacy and attitudes towards the course of sports history in the sub-dimension of achievements ($r=.417$, $p=.000$) and activities ($r=.316$, $p=.000$), and their total score of attitude towards the course of sports history ($r=.211$, $p=.013$).

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Today, university education is a very critical phase that affects individuals throughout their lives in terms of academic success and transferring their achievements to later stages of their lives. At this point, it must be underlined that prospective teachers' knowledge and achievements will positively influence their professional achievements and that it is of vital importance to transfer this knowledge to younger generations in order to raise academically successful generations.

It was found out in the present study that the physical education and sports teacher candidates' academic self-efficacy, mean scores in the sub-dimension of emotions, achievements and activities, and total scores of attitudes towards the course of sports history were above average (Table 3).

Ünlü and Erbaş (2018) reported in a study on physical education teacher candidates that participants' academic self-efficacy levels were moderate. Similarly, Şeker (2017) stated in another study on music teacher candidates that academic self-efficacy levels of prospective teachers studying in the department of music education were moderate. On the other hand, there were also studies which reported that physical education teacher candidates' academic self-efficacy levels were higher than the average (Alemdağ, Öncü, & Yılmaz, 2014), and physical education and sports students' academic self-efficacy levels were high (Ünlü & Kalemoğlu, 2011). The differences between the findings of the present study and those of the above-mentioned studies in the existing literature can be attributed to educational differences which result from different course features in sampling groups' curricula, physical and geographical differences in universities at which the sample groups are studying and the provinces in which they live.

No studies on the attitudes towards the course of sports history have so far been conducted in the existing literature. In the present study, it is argued that the fact that physical education and sports teacher candidates' attitudes towards the course of sports history is above average can be associated with their current active or sedentary sports life experiences in line with ongoing changes and developments in the related sports branches.

In the present study, a low level of positive correlation was found between participants' academic self-efficacy and the sub-dimension of achievements and activities, and their total scores of attitude towards the course of sports history (Table 4).

It can be seen in academic studies in the current literature that academic self-efficacy is related to various variables such as success orientation (Kayaş, 2013; Solmaz 2014), academic motivation (Alemdağ et al., 2014; Koca & Dadandı, 2019), performance approach orientation (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002; Cellar et al., 2011), and academic

motivation (Akbay & Gizir, 2010; Aydın, 2010). The impact of academic self-efficacy on the success is independent from students' intelligence levels, personality traits and self-esteem (Zuffianò et al., 2013). An individual's academic success is the most decisive factor for their future professional status, income and welfare (Spinath, 2012).

Analyzing teacher candidates' attitudes towards the course of history in different departments of the faculty of education, Altunay-Şam (2007) reported that a vast majority of students was aware of the importance and necessity of history as a course, whereas another group thought that the course was limited to memorizing only specific names and dates and that the courses in this field were taught for memorizing, which made them find history boring and monotonous as a course. It can be inferred from this finding that differences in academic levels of success among students with similar characteristics may occur depending on their academic self-efficacy. In the present study, it is not surprising that there was a relationship between academic self-efficacy and attitudes towards the course of sports history among physical education and sports teacher candidates. The positive attitudes of the students who attend the course of sports history are important in terms of their further success in the course and widening their horizons thanks to the knowledge that they obtain from the course as well as understanding and internalizing the stages which sports have gone through over the years.

In conclusion, a positive relationship was observed between physical education teacher candidates' academic self-efficacy and attitudes towards the course of sports history. It can be thus concluded that this resulted from teacher candidates' academic development during their education as a university student, which is a transition to a professional life, and their belief in the importance of transferring their academic knowledge to the upcoming generations once their professional lives start.

5. Recommendations

- 1) Further studies analyzing the relationship between academic self-efficacy and attitudes towards the course of history for physical education and sports teacher candidates in larger sample groups can be conducted.
- 2) Taking gender differences into consideration, physical education and sports teacher candidates' attitudes towards the course of history course can be explored.
- 3) Attitudes of teacher candidates studying in different departments regarding academic self-efficacy and the course of history can be compared.

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